Warner Bros. Will Soon Begin "The Gold Diggers of 1935." Glad Warners are Still on the Gold Standard

Canadian Moving Picture DIGEST

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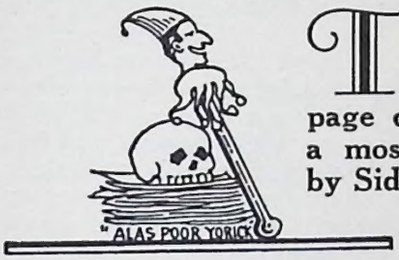
"FROM PLAY TO PICTURE"



THE New York Times of Sunday, Sept. 30th, on its page of Screen News has a most interesting article by Sidney Franklin, "From Play To Picture". Mr. Franklin is responsible for bringing to the screen M-G-M's "The Guardsman", with Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt, a treasure among delightful pictures of the past, "Reunion in Vienna" and M-G-M's latest all-sweeping success, "The Barretts of Wimpole Street", the latter destined to rival the popularity and profit-taking, or making qualities of "Smilin' Through" in which latter picture Norma Shearer became the loveliest woman on the screen.

In "The Barretts of Wimpole Street", Norma Shearer adds new lustre to her crown of screen successes; and those who adored her ("adored is a feminine word essentially, that is why we use it, for it is worth its weight in gold upon the screen") those who adored her in "Smilin' Through" will have another opportunity for that exhilarating emotion of adoration when they behold Shearer in "The Barretts of Wimpole Street". However, on with our story of "From Play To Pictures". Mr. Franklin states in an opening paragraph to his essay, "contrary to popular opinion, it is much more difficult to make a good picture from a stage play, even a successful one, than from a novel or a story written especially for the screen.

Mr. Franklin emphasizes that one of the difficulties lies in the fact that the story by way of the camera cannot be centralized in one or two rooms, but must cover territory.

Mr. Franklin's article contains these very frank lines "perhaps the greatest satisfaction that can come to a director is to hear someone say of one of his efforts 'It was as good as a play' ".

The critics in their praise of "The Barretts of Wimpole Street", extol its entertainment value with "better than the play". Those of us who had the good luck to have seen "The Barretts of Wimpole Street", cannot imagine anything being better than the play, but the thought of Norma Shearer as Elizabeth Barrett, Fredric March as Robert Browning, and that artist of colossal ability Charles Laughton, as Mr. Barrett, adds a new flavour to an already delectable dish of entertainment. We whet our appetite in anticipation!

MISTRESS "NELL GWYN"

"NELL GWYN" has been banned in the U.S.; and London, by way of Film Trade and press, is excited enough to create a Situation.

In London, "Nell Gwyn" is considered "harmless enough". Of course it is impossible to make Nell the wife of Charles II of England, since she who was an orange girl in London, later a successful actress, later a good samaritan, she made merry with the merry Monarch of British History, and England long ago accepted the lovely "Nell Gwyn" without even a lifted eyebrow.

Why the U.S. should ban Charles II's mistress and permit Henry VIII all of his mistresses is only answerable by the fact that when a man marries his mistress she becomes acceptable to society.

Henry VIII was a marrying man, Charles II never married "Nell Gwyn". However, if the producer Herbert Wilcox tacks on an epilogue the picture will purify itself for distribution we are told.

Of particular interest is the fact that the reports on "Nell Gwyn" state that it will further the prestige of British Films.

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

BARNUM has been credited or blamed for the expression, "The Public Be Damned". Whether blame or praise is due Barnum, I am with Barnum and add, "Certainly" to his damnation. If he did not say it, he should have said it; and if anyone else said it, I say certainly to their public summing up also. And yet curiously, among this Public is that glorious minority from which springs Leader or Leaders who use the Damned Public for the Public's good in spite of everything.

That is why we have preserved certain Ethics of Conduct, certain standards in Arts and Letters. This is why we still reverence sincerity in a preacher, a sinner, or a saint. The reason herein can also be found for the preservation of the Masters, whether they have expressed themselves in Symphonies, in Song, upon Canvas, in Stone, in Declarations of Freedom, in Magna Chartas, the Principles of Parliament, Trade Unions, Social Legislation to which I could add a few etcetras by way of emphasizing that the list herein is incomplete.

FOR our purpose, which in The Digest is never a too weighty one, exhibitors have sufficient worry figuring out which are good pictures without giving them philosophical nuts to crack, for our purpose I hope you catch the import of my intent which in "blain English" means that in as much as we are disgusted with Public Opinion as expressed by the Masses, the Mob, or the Public, it is this stagnant water, this damned public which educates the smug classes to accept that which has real merit; and which inspires poets with long, or barber-cared for hair, to sing exultantly, "out of stagnant pools a lily comes radiant as a vestal virgin draped in the whiteness of its purity". Believe it or not exhibitors the lily-white quotation is my own.

You will observe a heading in our pages, "Why Hollywood Goes Wrong". Following which there is an article all about Motion Pictures, taken from the Readers Digest of October which in turn digested the Motion Picture article from a story as published in the July 21st issue of Liberty, 1934. Arthur L. Mayer is the writer of the Liberty article and the heading in Liberty and the Readers Digest states the following about Mr. Mayer, "Operator of the Rialto on Broadway, formerly chief of advertising for Paramount Pictures",

THE Toronto Daily Star of Tuesday, October 2nd, republished the article from Readers Digest; and we have also been inspired to republish "Why Hollywood Goes Wrong" since it is a surprisingly good article and gives everyone within and without the Trade something worth thinking about.

I invite exhibitors to write us expressing their opinion. Conditions in Canada do not differ so greatly from those in the U.S. in show business. Reports on "Disraeli" in Canada, on "Little Women", on "Cavalcade" were particularly good.

I refrain from further comment since we are desirous of hearing your views unbiased, uninfluenced by any views which we may hold. We will, however, state that if it were not for such pictures as "Esquimaux", "Little Women", "Disraeli", "Berkeley Square", "Abraham Lincoln", "Henry VIII", all material for comment in "Why Hollywood Goes Wrong", Motion Pictures would not interest Respectable Finance, it would completely ostracize Society and the Intelligenzia, the latter which do influence Public Opinion, and it would degenerate into the staleness of "The Face On the Barroom Floor". Again, exhibitors and distributors, I invite your comment. Write us "Why Hollywood Goes Wrong" in accordance with your opinion; and whether you believe Arthur L. Mayer has struck the right key to the Sound Board of our Industry.

Some few weeks back we published a letter from Russia, from the director of the Motion Picture Industry there, another from Bombay, India, in which the writers request that The Canadian Moving Picture Digest be sent to them weekly. This week we have a letter from Buenos Aires, Republic of Argentina, in which the Senor Director de "Sintonia" addresses us as follows, "Kindly enter our subscription for one year to your magazine, sending it to the following address - - - Upon receipt of your bill for the above, check will follow immediately. Thanking you in advance, I am your very truly, (signed) Emilio Karstulovic B. Editor."

AND so Canada's Canadian Moving Picture Digest which will shortly celebrate its twentieth birthday travels with its film views, reviews, its Digest of News around the world; demonstrating the power of quality.

While we are on this topic of circulation we take this opportunity of thanking M. J. O'Brien Ltd., of O'Brien Theatre, Pembroke, Ont., who is in receipt of The Digest weekly, and who writes to let us know that he believes Canada should have its own Trade paper, and that he enjoys the Ray Presents and Editorial comment. Many of the exhibitors write they enjoy The Digest from "cover to cover", many particularly like "Ray Presents", in fact among the several hundred cards we have received in answer to our questionaire, nearly every exhibitor has written that he likes "Ray Presents". Which is either due to the fact that Ray's picture is on the page, or that these intimate little film talks as presented on this page, interests our readers.

(Continued on page 6)

British Board of Censors takes Exception to 504 Films, Highest on Record. Objections mainly due inadvisable words and objectional sounds

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO THE TRADE!

WARNER BROS.

beg to announce that they will

SPECIALIZE

exclusively in the production of

COMEDIES

such as "Here Comes the Navy"

MUSICALS

in the manner of "Dames"

ROMANCES

like "Happiness Ahead", which previewers call "grand"–"a sweet picture"–"100% entertainment"

AND DRAMAS

such as "British Agent", which has just done 2 weeks' business in its first 5 days at New York Strand–

FOR 1934-'35

Ray Presents

(Continued from page 4)

Maybe "the kid's clever", who knows? There is only one way of letting Ray know, write her, fill out your replies to the questionaire mailed to you and send the card along to The Digest. It's your business that we are interested in, your co-operation which we seek. You always write us when you get into trouble. Write us just for the joy of knowing each other and being aware of each other's service for our mutual good.

Thanks also to the following exhibitors who have also sent on their cards duly recording their receipt of The Digest weekly, and their comments in regard to same, David Rothstein, Roxy, Saskatoon, Sask., David is strong for the editorials, he would be coming from a country where "men are men"; G. C. Georges, Classic, Owen Sound, who enjoys articles on "the Internal Business and Reviews of pictures playing Toronto". I would call "G. C." a thinking exhibitor. Fred McLennan of the Capitol, Brockville, Ont., who states that he prefers "every page interesting news". Atta Boy, Fred. William H. Edward, Capitol, Belleville, Ont., who prefers "Personal editorials", another "thinking exhibitor". Fred R. Pursel, "good old Fred", not so old, but good, who writes us that in the matter of preferred pages he prefers, "all of it". the "it" being The Digest. This Fred, as you know, is from the Lyric, Simcoe, Ont. N. W. Morton of the Cameo, Morrisburg, Ont., another exhibitor who writes "All of it". Macadam Theatres Ltd., Casino, Halifax, N.S., who prefers "Ray Presents", and who adds that he does not think it possible for Canada to have as comprehensive a paper as M. P. Herald and Variety. Just give us a chance, the chance at some of the extensive Trade advertising which these mentioned papers receive, McAdam, and we will give you the Motion Picture news of the world in addition to "personality" in the Canadian Moving Picture Digest which will prove as "comprehensive" by way of service as the "best on the market".

WALTER P. WILSON, Capitol, Edmonton, Alberta, who writes he never misses his weekly Digest and who prefers, "Ray Presents". Thanks for the opinion, Walter, and for your personal "regards", also my long delayed apology for putting Edmonton in British Columbia instead of Alberta. If my professor of Geography at the Toronto University could write you he would tell you that despite the fact that Prof. Keyes, of Varsity, gave me the highest marks of the class in literature, he, who marked my map of Greece, gave me the lowest marks in the class for putting the Dead Sea in the Mediterranean. I did not do so badly with Edmonton, since I placed it in a real good British province, British Columbia.

The Palladium, Oxbow, Sask., writes, "I look it all over. but like the editorials". Then there is C. H. Marnel, Marnel, Wilkie, Sask., who writes that he doesn't like us so much now, he writes us why, but I am not going to tell you, because I must not betray a confidence. W. T. Brunker, Elite Theatre, Wainwright, Alta., it is always nice to hear from our Western exhibitors; L. M. Graburn of the Metropolitan, Regina, Sask., who likes the cover page, Editorial and "Ray Presents" — J. H. W. Moore of Avalon, Lacombe, Sask., who enjoys Editorials — W. E. Beatty, Stettler, Stettler, Alta., who likes Editorials— Peter Regan, you all know "Pete", a real showman, of the Capitol, Calgary, who likes "All of The Digest".

Harold A. Bishop, Capitol, Winnipeg, Man., another one of The Digest's exhibitor friends who enjoys "all of it". S. R. Tyler, another old-timer, eternally young as I am, albeit we are all getting grey hairs, friend Tyler writes from Highwood, High River, Alta., that he prefers The Digest, "From front cover to back". Hello, S. R., glad to see you are still an exhibitor, greetings and regards from Ray. E. Guilbault, Chauvin, Alta., who writes he likes The Digest" "3 to 6" which would lead us to include he likes all of it.

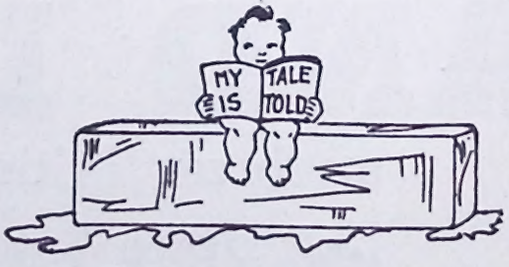
BO KEMPERS, Rex, Flin Flon, Man., advises the owner of the theatre is J. M. Wanless, Kempers expresses himself as preferring "all of the pages" and he attaches a photo of the Rex Theatre and a card which reads, "Dear Miss Ray Lewis: Extending the Mae West Greetings to you if you ever come to Flin Flon "come up and see me sometime". Thanks, Exhibitor Kempers, I sure will, and by the way, do you think I can make any money investing in Flin Flon mines; running The Digest for twenty years appears to be just a Labour of Love.

G. R. Miller, Legion, Wynyard, Sask., does not enjoy our politics, but he likes our Show Business. As long as there is something you like about us, Exhibitor Miller, who knows but that we might convert each other.

J. P. Pitner, Columbia, New Westminster, B.C., who likes, "Ray Presents". Palace Theatre, London, who writes "All are Good" in respect to our question, "What pages of The Digest do you prefer?"

Confederation Amusements Limited, Empress Theatre, Sherbrooke, N. D. de Grace, Montreal, who replies, "None in particular, like the whole issue". Ma Cherie Confederation. Peter J. Leger, Bathurst, N.B., likes "all of us". L. G. Babineau, Palace, Chatham, N.B., writes in capital letters that he likes The Digest from "COVER TO COVER" and that in the matter whether Canada should have its own Trade paper more capital letters for "SURE THING".

Art K. Graburn, Liberty Trail, Capitol, Rossland, B.C., who prefers, Editorial and Spotlight pages. C. A. Touriss, Capitol, Princeton, B.C., who enjoys "All of them". N. W. Mason, Roseland, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, who reads "All of them". Al Ritchie, Capitol, Sudbury, Ontario, another "all of them" Digest readers. George Farhan, Belle, Belleville, Ontario, who writes he prefers, "The Brilliant Editorials", with which brilliant remark and brilliant exhibitor, we make a brilliant close; more when space is available for publication.



Famous Players Remove Seal

The Joe Breen purity seal and the NRA insignia must be removed from films for Canadian showing. Famous Players Canadian Corp., claim "the former is an unnecessary aggravation, and the latter something belonging strictly to United States.

Nathan Burkan is Counsel for Miss Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt in Her Sensational Suit for Custody of Child

Digest of News

By The Editor

M-G-M Drops Plan on "Wandering Jew"

The Motion Picture Daily of Tuesday, October 2nd, reports the following: "M-G-M definitely dropped "The Wandering Jew" and Franklin Films Co., which owned the American Distribution rights, will send the picture back to the Twickenham Studios in England without showing it in a theatre here.

Phil Meyer of General Pictures Exchange held the territorial contract for New York, which likewise was sold to M-G-M. No other territory was sold.

In releasing M-G-M from the contract, William Shapiro, President of Franklin, and Meyer do not receive any money in settlement other than the expense incurred through advance fees, duty, legal fees and other disbursements involved in the negotiations. Meyer, however, loses a minimum of $12,500 against anticipated earnings, in settling rather than have the picture go out, after Rabbi Stephen Wise and a rabbinical committee recommended not showing it in New York.

Editor's Note:—*"'The Wandering Jew' is an alleged Biblical character who is said to have been cursed by Jesus, while He Was On His Way To The Cross. The curse was that the mocker should never die but always wander upon the face of the earth."*

Photoplay's Medal to "Little Women"

The Motion Picture Daily of Tuesday, October 2nd, reports: "Little Women" which starred Katharine Hepburn, has been awarded the Photoplay Magazine Gold Medal as the best film produced during 1933, Katharyn Dougherty, publisher of the Magazine, states in the November issue.

At the International Exposition, held in Venice, Miss Hepburn was awarded the gold medal to the actress giving the "supreme dramatic performance on the screen" for her work in "Little Women".

Editor's Note:—*Katharine Hepburn gave her greatest personal performance in 'Morning Glory', the flavour of which is still upon our tongue, the fragrance of which perfume is still in our nostrils."*

Giannini the Banker Becomes a Colonel

Kentucky, famous for beautiful women, beautiful horses, and mint juleps is fast becoming famous for the making of Colonels. You know we have a Kentucky-made Colonel, Yes Suh, in Col. N. L. Nathanson and now Dr. Giannini, banker, who recently told the world that he never lost a nickel in Motion Pictures although he loaned Motion Pictures millions and millions and millions, this same Giannini becomes a Kentucky Colonel, Yes Suh!

Mary Pickford Steals Star's Front Page

The Toronto Daily Star of Wednesday, October 3rd, has dressed up its front page with a portrait of Mary Pickford before the "mike". The caption is, "Canadian Celebrity Goes on the Air", which does not mean that Mary is giving Motion Picture "the air".

Interesting Press Headlines for Us to Read

As we glance over the front page of the Toronto Star, we note that the Dear Public still must have some dough since "10,000 at Detroit, Mich., wait all night for Bleacher Tickets" twenty hours in line for the game as played by the St. Louis Cardinals and Detroit Tigers which met for the first game of the 31st World Series.

Incidentally, while we are on the subject of 10,000 patrons, might we present for your consideration that 9,000 patrons clamoured for admission to Varsity Stadium to hear a Promenade Symphony Concert a week ago Thursday in Toronto, under the conductorship of Reginald Stewart, prices twenty-five to seventy-five cents, no seats reserved, first come first served and two thousand were turned away since the Stadium could only accommodate, by hanging patrons from the chandeliers, over railings, in Exits, etc., the number of 7,000.

Another headline reads, "Aviator-Sheik Slain at Malibu—Blonde Sought". This headline will not deter gentlemen from still preferring blondes.

The news comes from Hollywood and starts off with, "A beautiful blonde woman was sought today in the mystery murder of Charles Stellmach, 38, handsome aviator with a flair for love conquests, whose body was washed up on the sands of Malibu Beach, home of the movie elite.

Dolores Robinson, pretty 27-year-old brunette widow was questioned by police. She and Stellmach often swam at the place where the aviator's body was found. Authorities said that in the Jig-saw murder puzzle they had found evidences of jealousy, morbid philosophy, and suicide threats — an entire fantasia of events that added to the mystery." Republished from the Toronto Daily Star.

Editor's Note:—*Sounds exactly like a motion picture story and is the answer to the question where motion pictures get some of their plots. From life.*

They Done Her Wrong when they Sterilized the Belle

The Smithsonian Institute announces that it has discovered huge "stars of death", the rays of which would wipe out all earthly life if they could reach it. They are the blue-colored stars in the heavens. In Motion Pictures we have had death-dealing stars also which have wiped out all earthly profits, as for the radio some of the singing-blue stars have blued and crooned us to death.

Talking about "killing stars", Mae West certainly made a "killing" for herself and for Paramount with her first two pictures, but this last one which the Censors sterilized is neither flesh, fish nor fowl. In the first reels they have killed all the Ospreys to dress Mae up, in the next reels they kill off a million birds of paradise, dye them black and doll Mae up. In the next reels they leave all the Ostriches in Africa with a bare behind to dress Mae up in their plumes and in the last reel they kill the audience. Mae, the censors certainly "done you wrong". This criticism is an inventory, Mae and not a proposal of love.

B.I.P. "Blossom Time" Plays Fifth Week Regal Theatre, London, Increasing Business

Dear Old London

(Special to The Digest from our London correspondent, Dennison Thornton)

I AM definitely informed that next year Ernst Lubitsch will direct a picture for Toeplitz Productions, the recently formed British company whose first film, "Dictator", co-starring Madeleine Carroll and Clive Brook, is now before the cameras. Lubitsch's contract with Paramount ends in May. Between the time of the expiration and renewal of that contract he will make the British production. As yet no story has been chosen, but that it will be a satirical comedy is almost certain.

This signing of Lubitsch is a big feather in the Toeplitz hat, as well as a credit to British production. Distribution of the Toeplitz product, incidentally, will be done by Gaumont-British who recently honored the Italian producer at a special luncheon. Over the Sherry Mr. Toeplitz expressed the opinion that London was the logical world centre for film production. If the present rate of progress in British cinema was maintained during the next few years, there was no reason on earth why this should not become an accomplished fact.

Like Alexander Korda with whom he was associated in the making of "Henry VIII" and "Catherine the Great", Toeplitz is concerned only with the production of pictures for the world market. To this end he is determined to secure the finest brains and talent on earth, regardless of cost. Appropriations for his "Dictator" film run to nearly 400,000 dollars, and you can be quite sure he has not got Lubitsch for nothing.

The Toeplitz belief that London is a good place for film production on an important scale is shared by M-G-M who, according to a story in a trade paper, are planning to make pictures in this country. The source of the gazette's information it seems is Arthur Loew who states (I quote from its columns) "the films are to be made for world distribution, from stories that can best be produced on this side. The script for the first subject is now being prepared". The news story adds that M-G-M will send over some of their own stars to appear in their British product.

Twickenham Studios

THERE is much rolling-up of sleeves at the Twickenham Studios where producer Julius Hagen has just launched his new policy of "production for the world market only". For several years Twickenham have been quietly making their way by producing "quota" pictures for American firms. Some of these "quotas" have been good, some bad, others terrible. This policy continued until last year when Mr. Hagen decided to do something big on his own. He made "The Wandering Jew" which was to be released by M-G-M in the United States; and followed up with "Bella Donna". Both pictures have been successful. In fact the company itself has achieved success — such success that last week Mr. Hagen, assisted by the Mayor of Twickenham, opened his new $500,000 studios.

$2,000,000 *Expenditure Planned*

That Twickenham really mean business was strongly emphasized by Mr. Hagen in his address. He pointed out that his company's 1934-35 production programme called for an expenditure of over $2,000,000. With that money six pictures would be made for world consumption. First would be "Oliver Cromwell", probably with Cedric Hardwicke in the title role, to be followed by W. J. Locke's "Morals of Marcus" for which Lupe Velez had been secured for a featured role. Then "Vintage Wine", based on a successful West End stage comedy starring Seymour Hicks. Later on Betty Balfour in a re-make of "Squibbs" in which she scored her first big hit in the days of silence; and after that Mr. Hagen will make his own contribution to the "Private Lives" series with "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes".

Sam Smith in Canada

MR. SAM SMITH, the able managing director of British Lion Film Corporation, sailed for Canada a few days ago aboard the Empress of Britain. His arrival at Quebec should coincide with the receipt of this epistle at The Digest offices. Mr. Smith's itinerary will take him to Toronto and to New York. His trip, I understand, is a purely business one, and moreover it is more than likely that he will unspool a few new British films for the Toronto trade. It is two years since Mr. Smith last visited Canada, and there is sure to be a big welcome awaiting him in Toronto on his arrival.

Incidentally his company, British Lion, recently completed their big musical opus, "Gay Love", co-starring Florence Desmond and Sophie Tucker. From reports that have been reaching these ears I believe it is one of the best musical productions so far delivered by a British studio. Under Mr. Smith's direction British Lion have certainly been making big strides. A glance over their 1934-35 programme confirms our fondest hopes. One of the company's big forthcoming ventures will be "Ten Minute Alibi" from the sensational stage play that has been running in the West End for over a year — and is still going strong. It is, of course, a thriller, a species of entertainment at which British Lion are old masters.

The thriller tradition will be carried on in "The Green Pack" by Edgar Wallace, and in "Wild Justice", also a big stage success. In musical vein the company will offer "In Town Tonight" for which radio and stage stars are now being assembled. It has long been the policy of British Lion to provide entertainment with especial appeal to the British Islander. During the coming season, however, there will be a reaching out for international boundaries.

I am sure Canadian exhibitors and patrons will be more than pleased with what Mr. Smith has in store for them. Here is wishing him good luck from this end.

Editor's Note:—(*Sam Smith arrived in Toronto, and incidentally said "Hello at breakfast" to his cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Smith (Ray Lewis), left Toronto for New York to be gone for ten days arranging distribution of Twickenham and British Lion pictures. After which he returns to Toronto for further conferences on British films with Messrs. N. L. and Henry Nathanson.*)

"Voice of Action" with Byrd Expedition

The Byrd expedition theatre in Antarctic has concluded its first winter season with a perfect operating record. In a message wirelessed to Electrical Research Products, New York, John L. Herrmann and Carl O. Peterson say:

"Paramount Penguin Theatre, Little America, announces close of a very successful winter. "Voice of Action" Sound Equipment functioned perfectly under almost impossible conditions. Admiral Byrd and members of his expedition are deeply grateful to you and extend good wishes."

"Chu Chin Chow" Held Over Second Week at Roxy, New York, Breaks Records Opening Date

Why Hollywood Goes Wrong

Condensed from Liberty

Arthur L. Mayer

Operator of the Rialto, on Broadway; formerly chief of advertising for Paramount Pictures.

IN January, 1933, Paramount presented Mae West to a nation satiated with slimness. The first gun of our national campaign was an ad to the exhibitors, with the line, "Hitting the bull's-eye of lusty entertainment". Within 24 hours I was summoned to my chief, who pointed out that, dictionaries notwithstanding, "lusty" in juxtaposition to certain protuberances was susceptible of only one interpretation. The word was banished, but contracts and play dates inundated the home office. As a gag we inserted ads for additional clerks to handle Mae's mail, and to our delight we were able to use the applicants. *She Done Him Wrong* crowded balconies which exhibitors had advertised for deer-shooting privileges and filled mezzanines which had not been dusted for years.

For the first time in motion picture history not a single cancellation was received on either of the pictures which starred Miss West. This, ladies and gents, is four-star inside information, because the attack by reformers upon meretricious pictures and block booking is at present the subject of national debate. President Emeritus Lowell of Harvard states: "The monopolistic practice based on block booking and blind buying has enabled the five major producing companies to put forth on the community any films they please."

Actually the five major producers turn out less than 300 pictures a year. There is practically no town in America that does not consume more than this, and there is for most towns a dearth of playable film. Moreover, under the N.R.A. code there is a 10 percent cancellation clause which enables the exhibitor to dispense with any films he is disinclined to play.

Those who advocate legislation against block booking (buying pictures wholesale in advance) to insure the exhibition of good pictures are assuming that theatre owners, if unrestricted, would select the type of pictures they favor. But the undeniable fact is that the average exhibitor is a business man and does not operate his theatre for idealistic purposes. A survey recently completed, covering the experiences of exchanges in all key centres, clearly proves what everyone with practical experience in the industry has always realized: the elimination of block booking would decrease rather than increase the exhibition of socially valuable pictures.

The St. Louis exchange reports particularly bad business with *Abraham Lincoln*, the finest biographical film ever produced. In Springfield, Ill., for example, only 20 persons came in to see the picture. It was impossible to get exhibitors to play the finest of all Arliss pictures, *Disraeli*, at any price when it was first released. In the hope that their reaction had changed, the picture was recently reissued; but in this territory only one contract has thus far been sold.

Compare these results with *Scarface*, a gangster picture. Play dates were given immediately on every contract and many exhibitors report that *Scarface* enabled them to make up for losses suffered on pictures like *Arrowsmith*, *Cradle Song*, Paramount's beautiful picture with Dorothea Wieck, has had 25 cancellations thus far. On the other hand, Wheeler and Woolsey in *So This Is Africa*, a decidedly off-color picture, did a tremendous business in this territory.

In the Salt Lake City territory, the only way exhibitors can be compelled to play *Alice in Wonderland* is by refusing to give them Mae West pictures until they do. On *Old Ironsides* price adjustments were demanded and given in approximately 15 percent of the contracts in order to get play dates. *Little Caesar* was played by every large exhibitor in the territory.

The Pittsburgh exchange did not receive a single cancellation on *Public Enemy*, *I'm No Angel*, or *So This Is Africa*; but *Berkeley Square* was canceled by 15 percent of the exhibitors and *Voltaire* by 25 percent. *Cavalcade* was canceled by the majority of small towns, and larger cities insisted on a reduction in price.

In Philadelphia *Alice in Wonderland* was withdrawn on the fourth day of the first run and has since played children's matinées. *Berkeley Square* was canceled throughout the territory, but Clar Bow in *Hoopla* did not receive a single cancellation. In Oklahoma City *Emperor Jones* could not even get a first-run downtown showing, and *Maedchen in Uniform* was unable to secure a single booking in the entire territory. It was almost impossible to get exhibitors to play *Michael and Mary* or *Oliver Twist*, but no exhibitor refused to play any of the sex or gangster pictures.

In the Minneapolis territory 50 percent of the exhibitors asked for cancellation on George Arliss in *Voltaire*. One did ten times as much business on *I'm No Angel* as with either *Voltaire* or *Alexandre Hamilton*.

In Dallas *Alexander Hamilton* received about 100 bookings; a sophisticated, risqué picture, *Ex-Lady*, had 230.

In Cleveland *S O S Iceberg* played only 67 contracts out of 157. Even non-theatrical accounts such as schools refused to play *Evangeline*. On the other hand, *Doorway to Hell* and other gangster wild-youth pictures were getting repeat bookings galore.

Boston's taste was exemplified by the fact that there were no cancellations on *Little Caesar*, but 40 cancellations on *Abraham Lincoln*.

Of course there are occasional exceptions. *Little Women*, with the glamorous new star Hepburn, has scored a sensational success, and in the larger cities *Henry the Eighth* has done exceedingly well. These exceptions, however, only emphasize what every exhibitor has learned to his cost. The so-called "best element" in the community cannot be relied upon to support in large numbers the type of picture they claim to favor. Years ago I learned this lesson, to my cost, with *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*, daddy of all modern art pictures. It has been driven home to me season after season with instructive pictures like *Byrd at the South Pole*, with humanitarian, inspiring productions like Lubitsch's *Broken Lullaby*, with mystical, deeply religious pictures like *Outward Bound* or with classics like von Stroheim's *Greed*.

This season alone any exhibitor who put his bankroll on such magnificent and unusual productions as *Cavalcade*, *Cradle Song*, *Berkeley Square*, or *Eskimo* is fortunate if he is not in the poorhouse.

The fact is that the earliest available record of the movies is disreputable. Receipts for the opening day of the peepshow arcade on 14th Street, New York, were as follows:

U.S. Battleships	$ .25
Joseph Jefferson	.43
Ballet Dancer	1.05
Girl Climbing Apple Tree	3.65

(Continued on page 10)

Standard Theatre, Spadina Ave., Home of Yiddish Drama, Opens Season with "Evergreen," Gaumont-British and "The Voice of Russia"

Reviews and Previews
By "JAY L."

"HIDE-OUT" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)

"HIDE-OUT", Metro's successor to "The Thin Man", is, in your reviewer's opinion, one of the most entertaining films of the current year. As in the case of "The Thin Man", the greater part of its humour is derived from the dialogue rather than from its situations, and all the skill of W. S. Van Dyke, one of the best directors in the Industry, with the whole-hearted support of an excellent cast, have blended together to make a first-rate picture.

The story is simplicity itself. It is the story of Lucky Wilson, a New York playboy, who is contact man between the racketeers and their victims. One detective in particular, McCarthy, has it in for Lucky, and is determined to put him behind the bars. When the town begins to get too hot for Lucky, he skips out and hides away at a small farm in the country. There, he falls for the farmer's daughter (no, he's not a travelling salesman) and when the police under McCarthy finally catch up to him she agrees to wait for him, and that's all there is, there isn't any more.

Not an inspiring plot to be sure, but with Bob Montgomery as Lucky, and Maureen (Mrs. Tarzan) O'Sullivan as the farmer's daughter, you can realize what possibilities it has, and I assure you that those possibilities are achieved. Bob is delightful as Lucky, his humour is humourous and pathos, pathetic; while Maureen, although rather miscast as a farmer's daughter, plays her part with a sincerity that is inspiring. Edward Arnold ('member Sadie McKee?) is good as McCarthy, and Mickey Rooney as the farmer's young son, contributes much to the humour — and pathos of the picture. One scene in particular recalls itself to your reviewer's mind. Emma, Mickey's pet rabbit is missing, nor can it be found anywhere. At last dinner-time arrives, and when the family, including Lucky, are busily engaged in masticating the main course, Lucky remarking on how he is enjoying it, he asks what meat it is, and the father accidentally lets out that it's rabbit. Poor Mickey gulps for a moment and then breaks out in tears, and his plaintive cry, "But why did you have to use Emma?" is at the same time so pathetic and humorous that you don't know whether to laugh or cry.

* * * *

"THE LADY IS WILLING" (Columbia)

COLUMBIA, whose "One Night of Love" has been making such a hit, has a rather curious combination in "The Lady is Willing", currently featured at the Hollywood Theatre, Toronto. It is an American picture with an all-English cast, and with the characters all supposed to be French. Quel fous sont ces Americains; However, in spite of the oddity of the combination and in spite of a rather silly plot, you will find "The Lady is Willing" a very light, but a very entertaining picture.

The story is by Louis Vérneuil and adapted for the screen by Guy Bolton. It is the story of a despicable and loathsome capitalist, Gustave Dupont, who has robbed practically all France through worthless "gilt-edge securities" and although unfaithful to his wife Heléne, is at the same time stealing her fortune — a charming fellow as you can see. Among the many thousands whom he swindled, are a school-teacher, a pawn-broker, and a boxing school instructor. They meet accidentally, and on the advice of the boxing instructor, they go to Captain Le Tour, a private detective, and ask him to get their money back by fair means or foul. He accepts the proposition gladly (he too had been stung) and from then on the picture shows Le Tour's method of "catching the rat". The method, incidentally, is that of kidnapping Mme. Dupont and holding her for ransom, and at the same time taking advantage of M. Dupont's greed. After many complications, one of which occurs when Mme. Dupont escapes, Le Tour obtains the money and also wins the wife. Not bad for a few weeks work.

Leslie Howard is delightful as Le Tour, and reminds your reviewer of Bob Montgomery in his lighter moods. Binnie Barnes as Mme. Dupont is good, and Cedric Hardwicke as the sissified but avaricious Dupont could not be better. Claude Allister, Sir Nigel Playfair and Nigel Bruce are also in the cast, and Gilbert Miller was the director.

Miss Gertrude Lewis

Miss Gertrude Lewis, who has been teaching music for several years, and who has successfully attained several musical diplomas during her nine years of musical training at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, is taking additional students for piano instruction.

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Why Hollywood Goes Wrong

(Continued from page 9)

I believe that there is no exhibitor who does not desire to be numbered among the socially useful members of his community and who does not thrill with pride when his pictures receive critical approbation for their artistic or educational merits. Indeed I think most exhibitors would make heavy personal sacrifices to forgo showing shabby or salacious pictures. The reason they do not do so is unrelated to any trade practice; it is because the public has thus far been completely indifferent to pictures which failed to conform to the accepted canons of public entertainment.

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(*Liberty, July* 21, '34)

JOE O'DONNELL

Joe O'Donnell is now the proprietor of the Empress Hotel, Toronto, situated at the corner of Gould and Yonge.

The Digest extends its very best wishes to Joe and urges exhibitors when visiting Toronto to become "paying guests" at the Empress Hotel.

Censor Ban "Nell Gwyn" U.S. Causes London Film Sensation—May Pass with Added Epilogue; O Death Where is Thy Sting!

Show Business

"British Agent" Breaks Records at N.Y. Strand

Warner Bros.' "British Agent", co-starring Kay Francis and Leslie Howard, opened at the New York Strand last Wednesday to the biggest audience in the history of the house. The picture continued it's opening day's pace, by playing to S.R.O. houses all during its run.

Helen Hayes to New York; Brian Aherne Sails

Having completed "What Every Woman Knows" for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Henen Hayes came from Los Angeles to New York by airplane last week. Brain Aherne, her leading man in the film version of the Barrie play, also came on from the coast last week and sailed for England to fulfill stage engagements there.

Miss Hayes's next screen assignment will probably be "Vanessa," based on Hugh Walpole's novel.

Edmund Pierson Arrives at Coast

Edmund Pierson, noted English author of sensational murder stories, arrives at the coast Wednesday to work on "The Return of Frankenstein", which will be one of Universal's big pictures for the current seasson. "The Return of Frankenstein" will naturally have Karloff, who played the monster originally, in the feature role.

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Carole Lombard for Leading Role in M-G-M "Repeal"

Carole Lombard will have the leading role in "Repeal", the novel by Charles Francis Coe which will be filmed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer under the direction of Jack Conway.

Sam and Bella Spewack adapted the book for the screen.

Miss Lombard has been seen recently in "Twentieth Century" and in Bing Crosby's "We're Not Dressing". John Considine is the producer of "Repeal". The cast includes Leo Carrillo, Nat Pendleton and Una Merkel.

The Boswell Sisters Added to Cast

The Boswell Sisters, one of radio's most popular trios. are last-minute additions to the cast of "Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round", the Reliance production soon to be released through United Artists. The cast, headed by Jack Benny, Nancy Carroll and Gene Raymond, has been recruited from among outstanding representatives of the screen, the stage and radio.

Max Reinhardt Signed to Direct by Warner Bros.

Max Reinhardt, famous European stage director, has been signed by Warner Bro. Pictures, Inc., to an exclusive long-term contract under which he will direct motion pictures for that company. His first production will be a screen version of Shakespear's "Midsummer Night's Dream", with the famous "Dream" music of Felix Mendelssohn as an accompaniment.

"Little Women" Wins Photoplay Medal for 1933

RKO Radio Pictures, now famous production of the Louisa M. Alcott classic, "Little Women", starring Katharine Hepburn, has added another important laurel to its long list of tributes, by winning the Photoplay Magazine Gold Medal as the finest film produced during 1933, Katharyn Dougherty, publisher of the magazine announced today in the November issue.

Horton's "Widow" Role Wins Another at Culver City

Edward Everett Horton's role as the Ambassador in "The Merry Widow" has lead to another comedy role in a great musical romance. He has been chosen to play Count Czerney, principal laughmaking character, in "The Night is Young," glamourous musical romance of Vienna co-starring Ramon Novarro and Evelyne Laye.

Horton's whimsical humor in "The Merry Widow" was followed by an outstanding role in "Biography of a Bachelor".

Three players were added this week to the cast of "The Great Ziegfeld" by William Anthony McGuire. It has already been announced that William Powell would have the role of Florenz Ziegfeld; Fannie Brice would play herself; and Harriet Hoctor is the third member of the cast selected. The new players are Shaw and Lee, eccentric buffoons of a number of recent Broadway hits, and Baby Jane, who will sing a song in the production. Seymour Felix will stage and direct the dances in this production.

Toronto Theatres

LOEW'S—Manager Jules Bernstein—George Arliss in "The Last Gentleman", a United Artists production.

IMPERIAL—Manager Jack Arthur — "Dames" with Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell and Joan Blondell, produced by Warner Bros.

TIVOLI—Manager D. Krendal — "Now and Forever", with Shirley Temple, Gary Cooper and Carole Lombard ,a Paramount production.

SHEA'S—Manager Jerry Shea — "Million Dollar Ransom", with Phillips Holmes, Mary Carlisle and Edward Arnold, a Universal production.

UPTOWN—Manager Tom Daley — Third week for the Columbia production, "One Night of Love", with Grace Moore.

Constance Collier Famous English Actress for M-G-M Long Contract

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